

Rare Animals of Louisiana



Bachman's Sparrow

Aimophila aestivalis

Rarity Rank: S3/G3

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure



Photo by Steve Collins

Identification:

- Relatively plain with a long, rounded tail and large bill
- Wings, back and crown streaked with chestnut brown
- Underparts white and somewhat buffy
- Often runs along ground when disturbed
- Commonly recognized by simple but pleasant song
- Total length between 13 and 15 cm

Habitat:

- Mixed Hardwood-Loblolly Forest, Pine Flatwoods, Slash Pine/Post Oak Forests, Pine Savannah
- Open habitats that provide dense floor of many grasses and forbs as well as a few shrubs
- Suitable habitat is created and maintained when understory shrubs are removed by frequent burning

Food habits:

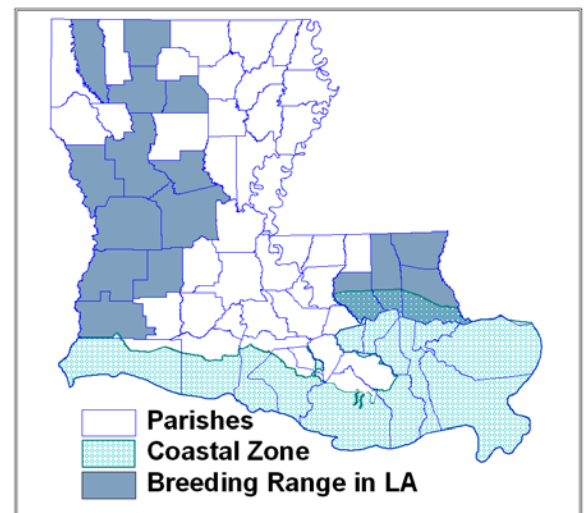
Seeds (mainly *Panicum* grass) and insects

Range:

- Breeding Range: Eastern Oklahoma and Texas to North Carolina and south to the Gulf coast
- Spends winter in the southern portion of breeding range and is very secretive at this time

Reproduction:

- Monogamous, though polygamous males have been recorded
- Minimum of two clutches each breeding season
- Nests are built by the female and are usually a cupped nest, frequently domed, primarily on the ground and made of grasses, forbs, rootlets and horse hair
- White or sometimes faint blue ovate eggs
- Female incubates and broods
- Both parents feed young



Range based on occurrences in Natural Heritage database

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Threats:

- Timber harvests may eliminate habitat
- Farm abandonment when it results in forest succession where ground vegetation decreases while a shrubby understory is formed
- Hurricanes and other catastrophic events often negatively affect habitats and populations in coastal regions

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Frequent burning encourages the growth of grasses in the understory
- Thinning of trees in highly forested area allows more ground space for nesting
- Use of techniques that avoid the total elimination of ground vegetation allows for quick inhabitation of the site

LA River Basins:

Pearl, Pontchartrain, Vermillion-Teche, Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine, Red, Ouachita

References:

- Dunning, J. B. 1993. Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 38 (A. Poole, P. Stettenheim, and F. Gill, Eds.). Philadelphia: The Academy of Natural Sciences; Washington, DC: The American Ornithologists' Union.
- Sauer, J. R., J. E. Hines, and J. Fallon. 2006. *The North American Breeding Bird Survey, Results and Analysis 1966 - 2006. Version 6.2.2006.* [USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center](http://www.fws.gov/patuxent/), Laurel, MD